

One Hundred Fifth Congress of the United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the twenty-seventh day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight*

Concurrent Resolution

Whereas Mark Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff of the Sanford, Florida, based New Tribes Mission were abducted on January 31, 1993, from the Kuna Indian village of Pucuro in the Darien Province of Panama;

Whereas the wives and children of these American citizens, Tania Rich (daughters—Tamra and Jessica), Nancy Mankins (son—Chad, daughter—Sarah), and Patti Tenenoff (son—Richard Lee III, daughters—Dora and Connie), have lived the past 5 years without knowledge of the safety of these three men;

Whereas Mark Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff presently are believed to be the longest held United States hostages;

Whereas this kidnapping represents a gross violation of the three missionaries' human rights and is not an isolated incident in Colombia where, since 1980, 83 innocent Americans have been held hostage by the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and the National Liberation Army (ELN);

Whereas the FARC and the ELN guerrilla groups in Colombia have both been designated terrorist organizations by the Department of State;

Whereas Colombia is engaged in a high-level conflict with these guerrilla insurgency groups, a number of whom are protectors of the deadly drug trade;

Whereas the FARC has recently threatened officials of the United States Government and kidnapped additional United States citizens in Colombia;

Whereas the region of Colombia where the three American missionaries are believed to be held is controlled not by the Colombian Government, but rather by the FARC;

Whereas on December 9, 1997, the President of Colombia stated on an internationally televised episode of Larry King Live that the FARC "in some ways have admitted indirectly that they have the missionaries";

Whereas Human Rights Watch has stated that "The FARC has an obligation to unconditionally free the three missionaries, with all necessary guarantees" and Amnesty International has declared their "request that the FARC respect international humanitarian norms, guarantee the life and physical safety of the missionaries and unconditionally free them and all other hostages";

Whereas congressional inquiries regarding the three missionaries have been made to United States Government entities, including,

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the White House, the Department of State, the Department of Defense, the Department of Justice, and the Federal Bureau of Investigation;

Whereas congressional inquiries regarding the three missionaries have been made to Amnesty International, Pax Christi, His Holiness the Pope John Paul II, and the International Committee of the Red Cross, which has provided assurances that their Colombian delegation “is still actively working in favor of the missing members of the New Tribes Mission”;

Whereas 58 Members of Congress and Senators signed letters to eight different heads of state, including Costa Rica, Mexico, Panama, Spain, Venezuela, Guatemala, Colombia, and Portugal, in attendance at the Iberian-American Conference in Venezuela in November of 1997, requesting any and all assistance in order to bring about a favorable outcome to this unfortunate event;

Whereas no official confirmation of life or death has been made by any United States Government entity, nongovernmental organization, foreign government, or religious institution;

Whereas the distinction between a “terrorist activity” and a “criminal activity” perpetrated on an American citizen traveling abroad should not be a limiting factor in terms of United States governmental investigation; and

Whereas every consideration to safety and prudence regarding action by the United States Government, foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations, international institutions, and other groups in this matter should be of the highest priority: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) the President of the United States and his emissaries should raise the kidnapping of Mark Rich, David Mankins, and Rick Tenenoff of the New Tribes Mission and other American victims in Colombia to all relevant foreign governments, nongovernmental organizations, and religious institutions at every opportunity until a favorable outcome is achieved;

(2) the international community should encourage any and all groups believed to have information on this case to come forward to help the families of the kidnapped missionaries;

(3) all appropriate information obtained by the United States Government, foreign governments, international institutions, nongovernmental organizations, and religious institutions should be turned over in a timely basis to the New Tribes Mission crisis response team;

(4) a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the President, the Secretary of State, the National Security Advisor, the Secretary of Defense, the Director of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, the Director of Central Intelligence, the President of the Republic of Costa Rica, the President of the United Mexican States, the President of the Republic of Panama, the King of Spain, the President of the Republic of Venezuela, the President of the Republic of Guatemala, the President of the Republic of Colombia, the President of the Republic of Portugal, and His Holiness Pope John Paul II; and

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(5) a copy of this resolution shall be transmitted to the New Tribes Mission, Amnesty International, Pax Christi, and the International Committee of the Red Cross.

Attest:

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Attest:

Secretary of the Senate.